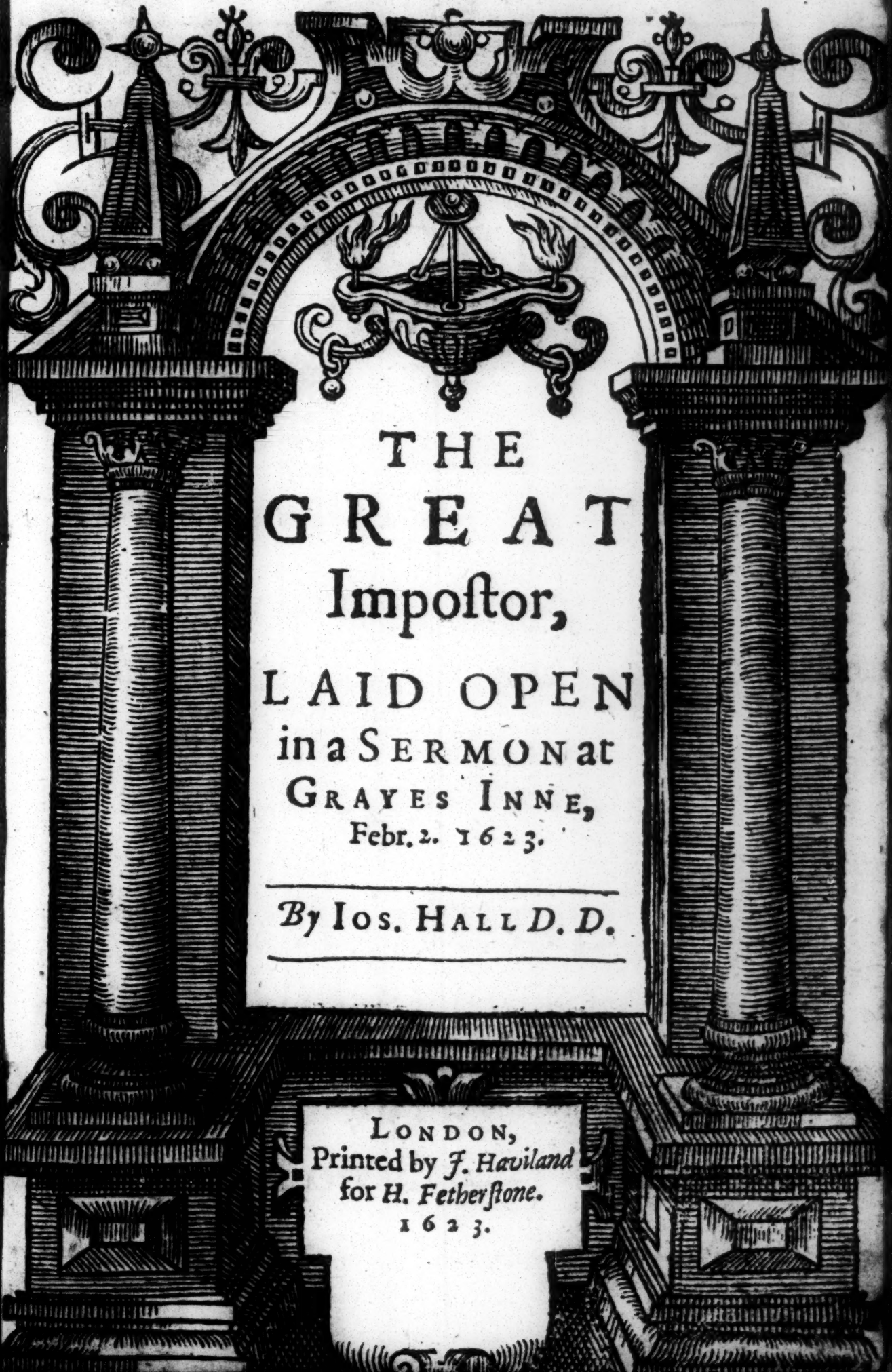

THE GREAT Impostor, LAID OPEN in a SERMON at GRAYES INNE, Febr. 2. 1623.

By IOS. HALL D. D.

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TO THE
MOST NOBLE,
AND WORTHILY
Honoured Societie
OF
GRAYES INNE:

AT WHOSE BARRE
This IMPOSTOR was
openly arraigned:

J. H.

HVMBLY DEDI-
CATES THIS PVBLIKE
LIFE OF HIS WEAKE
AND VNWORTHY
LABOVR.

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LABOVR.

THE GREAT IMPOSTOR,

Laid open, out of

IER. 17, 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things.

Know where I am; in one of the famous Phrontisteries of Law, and Iustice: wherefore serues Law and Iustice, but for the preuention or punish-

ment of fraud and wickednesse? Giue me leaue therefore to bring before you, Students, Masters, Fathers, Oracles of Law and Iustice, the greatest Cheator and Malefactor in the world, our owne Heart. It is a great word that I haue said, in promising to bring him before you; for this is one of the greatest aduantages of his fraud, that he cannot be seene: That as that old Iugler *Apollonius Thyanæus*, when he was brought before the Iudge, vanished out of sight; so this great Impostor, in his very presenting before you, dispeareth and is gone; yea so cunningly, that he doth it with our owne consent, and we would be loth that he could

could be seene : Therefore as an Epiphonema to this iust complaint of deceitfulnesse, is added *Who can know it ?* It is easie to know that it is deceitfull, and in what it deceiues, though the deceits themselues cannot bee knowne, till too late ; As wee may see the ship, and the sea, and the ship going on the sea, yet the way of a ship in the sea (as *Salomon* obserues) wee know not : God askes, and God shall answer ; What he askes by *Ieremie*, he shall answer by *S. Paul*, *Who knowes the heart of man ? Euen the spirit of man that is in him.* If then the heart haue but eyes enow to see it selfe by the reflection of thoughts, it is enough : Ye shall easily

1 Cor. 2. 11.

easily see and heare enough (out of the analogie and resemblance of hearts) to make you both astonished and ashamed.

The heart of man lies in a narrow roome, yet all the world cannot fill it; but that which may be said of the heart, would more than fill a world: Here is a double stile giuen it; of deceitfulnesse; of wickednesse; either of which knowes no end, whether of being, or of discourse. I spend my houre, and might doe my life, in treating of the first.

See then, I beseech you, the *Impostor*, and the *Imposture*; The Impostor himselfe, *The heart of man*; The Imposture, *Deceitfull aboue all things*.

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As deceitfull persons are wont euer to goe vnder many names, and ambiguous, and must be expreſt with an [*alias*] ſo doth the heart of man; Neither man himſelfe, nor any part of man hath ſo many names, as the heart alone; For euery facultie that it hath, and euery action it doth, it hath a ſeuerall name: Neither is there more multiplicitie, than doubt in this name; Not ſo many termes are vſed to ſignifie the heart, as the heart ſignifies many things.

When ye heare of the heart, ye thinke ſtraight of that fleſhie part in the center of the body which liues firſt, and dies laſt, and whoſe beatings you finde

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to keepe time all the body ouer; That is not it which is so cunning; Alas, that is a poore harmelesse peece; meerely passiue; and if it doe any thing, as the submini∫tration of Vitall spirits, to the maintenance of the whole frame, it is but good; no, it is the spirituall part that lurkes in this flesh, which is guilty of such deceit. We must learne of witty Idolatry to distinguish betwixt the stocke and the inuisible powers that dwell in it. It is not for me to be a stickler betwixt the Hebrewes, and the Greeke Philosophers, and Physitians, in a question of naturall learning, concerning the seat of the soule; nor to insist vpon the

reaſons why the ſpirit of God rather places all the ſpirituall powers in the heart, than in the braine; Doubtleſſe in reſpect of the affections there reſident, whereby all thoſe ſpeculatiue abilities are drawne to practiſe; It ſhall ſuffice vs to take things as we finde them, and to hold it for granted, that this Monoſyllable (for ſo it is in many languages) compriſes all that intellectiue and affectiue world which concerneth man; and in plaine termes to ſay, that when God ſaies *The heart is deceitfull*, he meanes, the vnderſtanding, will, affections are deceitfull.

The vnderſtanding is doubly deceitfull; It makes vs beleeue it

it knowes those things which it doth not; and that it knowes not those things which it doth: As some foolish Mountebanke, that holds it a great glory to seeme to know all things; or some presuming Physitian, that thinkes it a shame not to professe skill in any state of the body, or disease; so doth our vaine vnderstanding; therein framing it selfe according to the spirits it meets withall; if they be proud and curious, it perswades them, they know euery thing; if careleſſe, that they know enough.

In the first kinde; What hath not the fond heart of man dared to arrogate to it selfe? It knowes

knowes all the starres by their names; Tush, that is nothing; It knowes what the stars meane by their verie lookes, what the birds meane by their chirping, as *Apollonius* did; What the heart meanes, by the features of the face; it knowes the euents of life by the lines of the hand: the secrets of Art, the secrets of Nature, the secrets of State, the secrets of others hearts, yea the secrets of God in the closet of heauen; Yea, not only what God hath done, but what he will doe: This is (*Sapiens stultitia*) a wise folly, as *Ireneus* said of his *Valentinians*; All Figure-casters, Palmesters, Physiognomers, Fortune-tellers, Alchymists, fanta-

sticke

sticke proiectors, and all the rab-
Acts 19.19. ble of professors of those περίεργα, not so much curious as idle Arts, haue their word giuen them by the Apostle, Deceiuing and deceiued; neither can these men make any worse fooles, than their hearts haue made themselues; and well may that
βλαξιν νόμιον. Alexandrian taxe bee set vpon them in both names, whether of actiue, or passiue folly: And (as it commonly fals out, that superfluous things rob the heart of necessary) in the meane while, those things which the heart may and should know, it lightly mis-knowes: As our senses are deceiued by distance, or interpositions, to thinke the stars bea-

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mie and sparkling, the Moone horned, the Planets equally remote, the Sunne sometimes red, pale other some: so doth also our vnderstanding erre, in misopinion of diuine things; It thinkes it knowes God, when it is but an Idoll of fancy, as *Sauls* messengers, when they came into the roome, thought they had the true *Dauid*, when it was but a Wispe; it knowes the will of God, when it is nothing but grosse mis-construction: so as the common knowledge of men, though they thinke it a Torch, is but an *Ignis Fatuus* to leade them to a ditch: How many thousand Assyrians thinke they are in the way to the Pro-

phet, when they are in the midst of *Samaria*? How many millions thinke they walke fairely on to heauen, when indeed they are in the broad way that leads to destruction? Oh poore blind Pagans, halfe-sighted Turkes, bleare-eied Iewes, blind-folded Papists, Squint-eied Schismaticks, purblind ignorants, how well doe they finde themselues pleased with their deuotion, and thinke God should bee so too; when it is nothing but a mixture of mespriſon, superstition, conceitednesse; and (according to the seldome-reuerently-vsed prouerb) whiles they thinke they haue God by the finger, they hold a deuill by the toe; and

and all this, because their heart deceiues them. If careleſſe, and loth to bee at the paines of knowing more, it perſwades them they know enough; that they cry out of more, as he did on the ointment, (*Vt quid perditio hæc?*) What needs all this waſte? and makes them as conſcionable for knowledge, as *Eſau* was for cattle, *I haue enough, my brother, keepe that thou haſt to thy ſelfe*; or as contentedly-reſolute, as the *Epicure* in the Goſpell: *Soule take thy eaſe, thou haſt knowledge enough laid vp for many yeeres.*

From whence it is, that too many reſt ſimply (yea wilfully) in their owne meaſure, not ſo much as wiſhing more skill in

Soule-matters; applauding their owne safe mediocritie; like the credulous blinde man that thought he now saw a shimmering of the Sunne-beames, when indeed his backe was towards it: Hence it is that they scoffe at the foolishnesse of preaching, scorne the forward bookishnesse of others, fearing nothing but a surfet of Manna, and hating to know more than their neighbours, than their fore-fathers; & thus are led on muffled vp in an vnfelt ignorance, to their graue, yea, (without the mercy of God) to their hell.

And as in these things there is a presumption of knowing what we doe not; so contrarily

a dissimulation and concealement of the knowledge of what we doe vnderstand; The heart of man is a great lier to it selfe this way; Saint *Paul* saies that of Pagans, which I may boldly say of Christians, they haue the effect of the law written in their hearts; yet many of them will not bee acknowne of one letter ingrauen there by the finger of God: Certaine common principles there are (together with this law) interlinearily written in the tables of the heart, as that we must doe as we would be done to; That there is a God; That this God is infinite in iustice and truth, and must be serued like himselfe; these they

either blot out, or lay their finger on, that they may not bee ſeene, purpoſely, that they may ſinne freely; and faine would perſwade themſelues they neuer had any ſuch euidence from God: ſo putting off the checks of conſcience with bold denyalls; like the harlot of *Ierichо*, (but worſe than ſhe) that hath hid the Spies, and now out-faces their entertainment: Wherein the heart doth to it ſelfe, that which *Nahaſh* the Ammonite, would haue done to Iſrael, put out his owne right eie, that it may not ſee that law whereby it might be conuinced, and finde it ſelfe miſerable. Thus the vnderſtanding of man is euery way

way deceitfull in ouerknowing, mis-knowing, dissembling; in all which it is like an euill and vnfaithfull eye, that either will be seeing by a false glasse, or a false light, or with distortion; or else wilfully closes the lids that it may not see at all; and in all this deceiues vs.

The will is no lesse cunning; which though it make faire pretences of a generall inclination to good, yet (*hîc & nunc*) in particulars, hangs towards a pleasing euill; Yea though the Vnderstanding haue sufficiently informed it of the worthinesse of good, and the turpitude of euill, yet being ouercome with the false delectableness of sinne, it

yeelds to a misse-assent; Reason being (as *Aquinas* speakes) either swallowed vp by some passion, or held downe by some vicious habit: It is true, still the Will followes the Reason, neither can doe otherwise; but therefore, if Reason mis-led be contrary to Reason, and a schisme arise in the soule, it must follow that the Will must needs be contrary to Will and Reason; Wherein it is like a Planet, which though it be carried about perpetually by the first mouer, yet slily creepes on his owne way, contrary to that strong circumuolution. And though the minde be sufficiently conuinced of the necessitie, or profit of a good act, yet

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for the tediousnesse annexed to it, in a dangerous spirituall accedie, it insensibly slips away from it, and is content to let it fall; As some idle, or fearfull Merchant, that could be glad to haue gold, if it would come with ease, but will not either take the paines, or hazard the aduenture to fetch it: Thus commonly the Will (in both respects) Waterman-like lookes forward, and rowes backward; and vnder good pretences doth nothing but deceiue.

The affections are as deceitfull as either; whether in misse-placing, measure, or manner.

Mis-placing: They are fiery where they should be coole; and where

where they should burne, freeze; Our heart makes vs beleeue it loues God, and giues him pledges of affection; whiles it secretly doats vpon the world; like some false strumpet, that entertaines her husband with her eyes, and in the meane time treads vpon the toe of an Adulterer vnder the board: That it loues iustice, when it is but reuenge; That it grieues for the missing of Christ, when indeed it is but for the loaues and fishes; That it feares God, when indeed it is but afraid of our owne torment; That it hates the sinne, when it is the person; That it hates the world, when it thrusts God out of doores to lodge it.

Measure:

Measure: That we loue God enough, and the world but enough, when as indeed the one loue is but as the cold fit of an ague, the other an hot; we chill in the one, no lesse than we glow in the other; when wee make God only a stale to draw on the world; That wee doe enough hate our corruptions, when (at our sharpest) we doe but gently sneape them, as *Hely* did his sons; or as some indulgent parent doth Tan vnthriftie darling, whom he chides, and yet feeds with the fewell of his excesse; That we haue grieued enough for our sinnes, when they haue not cost vs so much as one teare, nothing but a little fashionable winde,

winde, that neuer came further than the roots of our tongue; That we doe enough compassionate the afflictions of *Ioseph*, when we drinke wine in bowles; That wee feare God more than men, when wee are ashamed to doe that in presence of a childe, which wee care not to doe in the face of God.

Manner: That our heart loues, and hates, and feares, and ioyes, and grieues truly, when it is an hypocrite in all; That it delights constantly in God, and holy things, when it is but an *Ephraims* morning dew; That our anger is zealous, when it is but a flash of personall malice, or a superstitious furie; That we

feare

feare as ſonnes, when it is as cowards, or ſlaues; That we grieue as Gods patients, when we fret, and repine, and ſtruggle like franticks againſt the hand of our Maker. Thus (to ſumme vp all) the heart of man is wholly ſet vpon cozenage; the vnderſtanding ouer-knowing, miſ-knowing, diſſembling; The will pretending, and inclining contrarily; The affections mocking vs in the obiect, meaſure, manner; and in all of them the heart of man is deceitfull.

Ye haue ſeene the face of this Cheater; looke now at his hand; and now ye ſee who this Deceiuer is, ſee alſo the ſleights of his deceit; and therein, the faſhion, the

the subiect, the sequell of it; from whence we will descend to our Demeanure towards so dangerous an Impostor.

The fashion of his deceit is the same with our ordinary Iuglers; either cunning conueyance, or false semblance. Cunning conueyance, whether into vs, in vs, from vs.

The heart admits sinne, as Paradise did the Serpent; There it is, but by what chinkes or cranies it entered, we know not; so as we may say of sinne as the Master of the feast in the Gospell said to his slouenly guest, *Quomodo intrasti? How camest thou in hither?* Corruption doth not eat into the heart as our first Parents

rents did into the apple, ſo as the print of their teeth might bee ſeene, but as the worme eats into the core, inſenſibly; Neither is there leſſe cloſeneſſe when it is entered; I would it were as vntrue a word, as it is an harſh one, that many a profeſſedly-Chriſtian heart, lodges a deuill in the blinde roomes of it, and either knowes it not, or will not be acknowne of it; euery one that harbours a willing ſinne in his breſt, doth ſo: The malicious man hath a furious deuill; the wanton an vncleane deuill, a *Beelphegor*, or a *Tammuz*; the proud man a *Lucifer*, the couetous a *Mammon*; Certainly, theſe ſoule ſpirits are not more truly in

in hell, than in a wicked heart; there they are, but ſo cloſely, that I know not if the heart it ſelfe know it; it being verified of this citadell of the heart, which was ſaid of that vaſt *Ninive*, that the enemie had taken ſome parts of it, long ere the other knew it: What ſhould I ſpeake of the moſt common, and yet moſt dangerous gueſt, that lodges in this Inne of the heart, Infidelity? Call at the doore, and aske if ſuch a one hoſt not there; They within make ſtrange of it, deny it, forſweare it; Call the officers, make priuy ſearch, you ſhall hardly finde him: Like ſome Ieſuite in a Popiſh dames chamber, he is

ſo

so closely contriued into falle floores, and double walls, that his presence is not more easily knowne, than hardly conuinced, confessed. How easie is it to say, that if infidelity did not lurke in the hearts of men, they durst not doe as they doe; they could not but doe, what they doe not? Durst they sin if they were perswaded of an hell? durst they buy a minute of pleasure with euerlasting torments? Could they so sleight heauen if they beleeued it? Could they be so loth to possesse it? Could they thinke much of a little painfull goodnesse to purchase an eternity of happinesse? No, no, men, fathers, and brethren;

if the heart were not Infidell, whiles the face is Christian, this could not bee. Neither doth the heart of man more cunningly conuey sinne into, and in it selfe, than from it; The sin that ye saw euen now openly in the hands, is so swiftly past vnder the board, that it is now vanished; Looke for it in his forehead, there it is not; looke for it vnder his tongue, there is none; looke for it in his conscience, ye finde nothing; and all this by the *legier-de-maine* of the heart. Thus *Achan* hath hid his wedge, and now he dares stand out to a lot; Thus *Salomons* Harlot hath wip't her mouth, and it was not she: Thus *Saul* will lie-out his sacri-

ſacriledge, vntill the very beaſts out-bleat, and out-bellow him; Thus the ſwearer ſweares, and when he hath done, ſweares that hee ſwore not; Thus the vncleane fornicator bribes off his ſinne, and his ſhame, and now makes challenges to the world of his honeſty. It cannot be ſpoken how peeuiſhly witty the heart of man is this way; neither doubt I but this wilineſſe is ſome of the poyſon that the ſubtile ſerpent infected vs with in that fatall morſell: They were three cunning ſhifts which the Scripture recordeth of three women (as that ſex hath beene euer noted for more ſudden pregnancie of wit) *Rachel*, *Rahab*, and

the good wife of *Bahurim*; The firſt hiding the Teraphim with a modeſt ſeat, the ſecond, the ſpies with flaxe-ſtalkes, and the third *Dauids* ſcouts with corne ſpred ouer the Well; but theſe are nothing to the deuices that nature hath wont to vſe for the cloaking of ſinne; *God made man vpright*, ſaith *Salomon*, *but he ſought many inuentions*: Is *Adam* challenged for ſinne? Behold all on the ſudden it is paſſed from his hand, to Gods; *The woman that thou gaueſt me*: Is *Saul* challenged for a couetous and diſobedient remiſſeneſſe? the ſinne is ſtraight paſſed from the field to the Altar; *I ſaued the fatteſt for a ſacrifice to the Lord thy God*; So the one be-

begins his ſinne in God, and the other ends it in him : Is *Dauid* bewitched with luſt to abuſe the Wife ? the Husband muſt bee ſent home drunke, to hide it, or if not that, to his long home, in a pretended fauour of his valour : Is a griping Vſurer diſpoſed to put his money together to breed a monſter ? hee hath a thouſand quirks to cozen both law and conſcience : Is a Simoniacall Patron diſpoſed to make a good match of his peoples ſoules ? it ſhall be no bargaine, but a gift : hee hath a liuing to giue, but an horſe to ſell. And ſure I thinke in this wiſe age of the world, Vſurers and Simoniſts ſtriue who ſhall finde the

wittieſt way to hell : What ſhould I ſpeake of the ſecret frauds in contracts, booties in matches, ſubornation of inſtruments, hiring of oathes, feeing of officers, equiuocations of anſwers, and ten thouſand other tricks that the heart of man hath deuiſed for the conueiances of ſinne; in all which it too well approues it ſelfe incomparably deceitfull.

The falſe ſemblance of the heart is yet worſe; for the former is moſt-what for the ſmothering of euill; this is for the iuſtifying of euill, or the diſgrace of good; In theſe two doth this act of falſhood chiefly conſiſt; in making euill good, or good euill.

euill. For the first; The naturall man knowes well how filthy all his brood is, and therefore will not let them come forth, but disguised with the colours and dresses of good; so as now euery one of natures birds is a Swan; Pride is handsomnesse, desperate fury, valour; lauishnesse is noble munificence, drunkennesse ciuility, flattery complement, murderous reuenge, iustice; the Curtizan is *bona fœmina*, the Sorcerer a wise man, the oppressor a good husband; *Absolom* will goe pay his vowes; *Herod* will worship the Babe. For the second; such is the enuy of nature, that where shee sees a better face than her

owne, she is ready to scratch it, or cast dirt in it; and therefore knowing that all vertue hath a native beauty in it, she labours to deforme it by the foulest imputations. Would the Israelites be deuout? they are idle; Doth *Dauid* daunce for ioy before the Arke? he is a foole in a Morris: Doth Saint *Paul* discourse of his heauenly Vision? too much learning hath made him mad. Doe the Disciples miraculously speake all the tongues of Babel? They are full of new wine: Doe they preach Christs Kingdome? they are seditious; The resurrection? they are bablers. Is a man conscionable? he is an Hypocrite: Is he conformable? he

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is vnconſcionable : Is he plaine dealing? he is rudely vnciuill : Is he wiſely inſinuatiue? he is a flatterer : In ſhort, ſuch is the wicked craft of the heart, that it would let vs ſee nothing in it owne forme ; but faine would ſhew vs euill faire, that we might be inamored of it, and vertue vgly, that we might abhorre it; and as it doth for the way, ſo doth it for the end ; hiding from vs the glory of heauen, that is laid vp for ouer-commers, and ſhewing vs nothing but the pleaſant cloſure of wickedneſſe ; making vs beleeue that hell is a palace, and heauen a dungeon, that ſo we might be in loue with death; and thus both in cunning conueyance,

ueyance, and falle semblance, *The heart of man is deceitfull aboue all things.*

Ye haue seene the fashion of this deceit; cast now your eies vpon the subiect: And whom doth it then deceiue? It doth deceiue others, it can deceiue it selfe, it would deceiue Sathan, yea God himselfe. Others, first: How many doe we take for honest and sound Christians, who yet are but errant hypocrites? These Apes of Sathan haue learned to transforme themselues into Angels of light; The heart bids the eies looke vpward to heauen, when they are full of adultery; It bids the hands to raise vp themselues towards their

their Maker, when they are full of bloud ; It bids the tongue wagge holily, when there is nothing in the bosome but Atheous profaneneſſe ; It bids the knee to bow like a Camel, when the heart is ſtiffe as an Elephant ; yea if need bee it can bid a teare fall from the eie, or an almes or iuſt action fall from the hand, and all to gull the world with a good opinion ; In all which, falſe chapmen and horſe-courſers doe not more ordinarily deceiue their buyers in ſhops and faires, than wee doe one another in our conuerſation : Yea, ſo crafty is the heart that it can deceiue it ſelfe ; By ouer-weening his own powers, as

as the proud man; by vnder-valuing his graces, as the modest; by mis-taking his estate, as the ignorant; How many hearts doe thus grossely beguile themselues? The first thinkes hee is rich, and fine, when hee is beggerly and naked; so did the Angell of Laodicea: The second is poore in his owne spirit, when he is rich of Gods spirit: The third thinkes that he is a great fauorite of heauen, when he is rather branded for an out-cast; that he is truly noble, when he is a slaue to that, which is baser than the worst of Gods creatures, sinne: Let the proud and ignorant worldling therefore know, that though others may

mocke

mocke him with applauſes, yet hat all the world cannot make him ſo much a foole as his owne heart.

Yea, ſo cunning is the heart, that it thinkes to goe beyond the deuill himſelfe: I can (thinks it) ſwallow his bait, and yet auoid his hooke; I can ſinne, and liue; I can repent of ſinning, and defeat my puniſhment by repenting; I can runne vpon the ſcore, and take vp the ſweet and rich commodities of ſinfull pleaſure; and when I haue done, I can put my ſelfe vnder the protection of a Sauiour, and eſcape the arreſt: Oh the world of ſoules that periſh by this fraud, fondly beguiling them-

themselues, whiles they would beguile the Tempter.

Yet higher: Lastly, as Satan went about to deceiue the Son of God; so this foolish consort and client of his goes about to deceiue God himselfe: The first paire of hearts that euer was, were thus credulous, to think they should now meet with a meanes of knowledge and Deifying, which God either knew not of, or grudged them, and therefore they would be stealing it out of the side of the apple, without God, yea against him: Tush, none eye shall see vs; *Is there knowledge in the most high*, saith the sottish Atheist? *Lord, haue not we heard thee preach in our streets?*

ſtreets? haue not we caſt out Deuils in thy name? ſayes the ſmoothing hypocrite; as if he could fetch God ouer for an admiſſion into heauen. *Thou haſt not lied to man, but to God,* ſaith S. *Peter* to *Ananias*. And pettiſh *Ionas*, after hee had beene cooled in the belly of the Whale, and the Sea, yet will be bearing God downe in an argument to the iuſtifying of his idle choler, *I doe well to be angry to the death.* But as the greateſt Politicians are oft ouertaken with the groſſeſt follies (God owes proud wits a ſhame) the heart of man could not poſſibly deuiſe how ſo much to befoole it ſelfe, as by this wicked preſumption: *Oh yee fooles, when will ye vnderſtand? He* Pſal. 94. 10, 11.

that

that formed the eye, shall he not see? Hee that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he vnderstand? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanitie. A rod for the backe of fooles, yea a rod of iron for such presumptuous fooles, to *crush them in peeces like a Potters vessell.*

Ye haue seene the fashion and the subiect of this deceit: the sequell, or effect followes; euery way lamentable; For hence it comes to passe that many a one hath had his heart in keeping fortie, fiftie, threescore yeeres, and more, and yet is not acquainted with it; and all because this craft hath kept it at the Priscillianists locke, *Tu omnes, te ne-*

mo;

mo; It affects to be a searcher of all men, no man is allowed to come aboard of it; And if a man whether out of curiositie, or conscience, bee desirous to inquire into it (as it is a shame for a man to be a stranger at home; *Know ye not your owne hearts*, saith the Apostle;) it casts it selfe, *Proteus*-like, into so many formes, that it is very hard to apprehend it. One while the man hath no heart, (לא לב) saith *Salomon*; Then hee hath (לב-ולב) an heart, and an heart, saith *Dauid*; and one of his hearts contradicts another; and then how knowes he whether to beleeue? And what certainty, what safety can it be for a man to liue Psal. 12.

vnacquainted with himſelfe: Of this vnacquaintance, ſecondly, ariſes a dangerous meſ-priſon of a mans ſelfe, in the nature and quantity of his ſinne, in the quality of his repentance, in his peace and intireneſſe with God, in his right to heauen, and (in a word) in his whole ſpirituall eſtate. Of this meſ-priſon, thirdly, ariſes a fearefull diſappointment of all his hopes, and a plunging into vnauoidable torments: Wherein it is miſerable to ſee, how cunningly the traiterous hearts of many men beare them in hand all their liues long; ſoothing them in all their courſes, promiſing them ſucceſſe in all their waies, ſecuring them

from

from feare of euills, assuring them of the fauour of God, and possession of heauen (as some fond Bigot would bragge of his *Bull*, or *Medall*, or *Agnus Dei*; or, as those Priests that *Gerson* * taxes, who made the people beleeue that the Masse was good for the eye-sight, for the mawe, for bodily health, and preseruation) till they come to their deathbeds; But then when they come to call forth the comforts they must trust to, they finde them like to some vnfaithfull Captaine, that hath all the while in Garrison filled his purse with dead paies, and made vp the number of his companies with borrowed men; and in time of

* *Qui publicè volunt dogmatizare seu prædicare populo, quod si quis audit missam in illo die non erit cæcus, nec morietur morte subitanea, nec carebit sufficienti sustentatione, &c.*

ease shewd faire; but when hee is called forth by a sudden alarum, bewraies his shame and weaknesse, and failes his Generall when he hath most need of him; right thus doe the perfidious hearts of many, after all the glorious bragges of their security, on the bed of their last reckoning, finde nothing but a cold despaire, and a wofull horror of conscience; and therefore too iustly may their hearts say to them, as the heart of *Apollodorus* the Tyran seemed to say vnto him; who dreamed one night that hee was fleaed by the Scythians, and boyled in a Caldron; and that his heart spake to him out of the kettle (ἐγὼ σοὶ τε-

) It is I that haue drawne thee to all this. Certainly neuer man was, or shall bee frying in hell, but cries out of his owne heart, and accuses that deceitfull peece as guilty of all his torment: For let Satan be neuer so malicious, and the world neuer so parasiticall, yet if his owne heart had beene true to him, none of these could haue hurt him. Let the rest of our enemies doe their worst, only from the euill of our owne hearts, good Lord deliuer vs.

It were now time for our thoughts to dwell a little vpon the meditation, and deploration of our owne danger and misery, who are euery way so inuiro-

ned with subtlety. If wee looke at Satan, his old title is, *that old Serpent*; who must needs therefore now, by so long time and experience, bee both more old and more Serpent. If we looke at sinne, it is as crafty as he; *Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sinne*: If at our owne hearts, we heare (that which we may feele) *that the heart is deceitfull aboue all things*. Oh wretched men that we are, how are we beset with Impostors on all hands; If it were more seasonable for vs to bewaile our estate, than to seeke the redresse of it; But since it is not so much worth our labour to know how deepe the pit is, into which wee are fallen,

fallen, as how to come out of it, heare rather (I beseech you) for a conclusion, how wee may avoid the danger of the deceit of our false heart; euen iust so as we would preuent the nimble feates of some cheating Iugler; Search him, watch him, Trust him not.

Looke well into his hands, pockets, boxes, sleeues, yea, vnder his very tongue it selfe; There is no fraud so secret, but may be descried; were our hearts as crafty as the deuill himselfe, they may be found out; We are not ignorant (saith Saint *Paul*) of Satans deuices; much more then may we know our owne; Were the hearts of men (as *Salo-*

νοήματα αὐτῆς.

mon speakes of Kings) like vn-
to deepe waters, they haue a
bottome, and may be fathomed;
Were they as darke as hell it
selfe, and neuer so full of win-
dings, and blind waies, and ob-
scure turnings, doe but take the
lanthorne of Gods law in your
hand, and you shall easily finde
all the false and foule corners of
them; As *Dauid* saith of the Sun,
nothing is hid from the light thereof;
Proue your selues, saith the Apo-
stle; It is hard if falsehood be so
constant to it selfe that by many
questions it bee not tripped:
Where this duty is slackened, it
is no wonder if the heart bee
ouer-run with spirituall fraud;
Often priuy searches scarre away

vagrant.

vagrant, and disorderly persons; where no inquiry is made, is a fit harbour for them; If yee would not haue your hearts, therefore, become the lawlesse Ordinaries of vncleane spirits, search them oft; Leaue not a straw vnshaken to finde out these Labanish Teraphim that are stolne, and hid within vs; And, when wee haue searched our best, if we feare there are yet some vnknowne euills lurking within vs (as the man after Gods owne heart prayes against secret sinnes) let vs call him in that cannot be deceiued; and say to God with the Psalmist, *Search thou me ô Lord, and trie me*; Oh let vs yeeld our selues ouer to bee ran-

ransackt by that all-seeing eye, and effectuall hand of the Almighty. All our daubing, and cogging, and packing, and shuffling lies open before him, and he only can make the heart ashamed of it selfe.

And when our hearts are once stript naked, & carefully searcht, let our eyes be euer fixedly bent vpon their conueyances, and inclinations; If we search and watch not, wee may be safe for the present, long wee cannot; for our eye is no sooner off, than the heart is busie in some practise of falshood; It is well if it forbeare whiles wee looke on, for *The thoughts of mans heart are only euill continually*; and many a heart

heart is like some bold and cunning theefe, that lookes a man in the face, and cuts his purse: But surely, if there be any guardian of the soule, it is the eye; *The wise mans eye* (saith *Solomon*) *is in his head*; doubtlesse, on purpose to looke into his heart: *My sonne, aboue all keepings keepe thy heart*, saith he; If we doe not dogge our hearts then in all our wayes, but suffer our selues to lose the sight of them, they run wilde, and we shall not recouer them till after many slippery tricks on their parts, and much repentance on ours. Alas, how little is this regarded in the world? wherein the most take no keepe of their soules, but suffer themselues

selues to run after the wayes of their owne hearts, without obseruation, without controlement; What should I say of those men, but that they would faine be deceiued, and perish: For after this loose licentiousnesse (without the great mercy of God) they neuer set eye more vpon their hearts, till they see them either fearfully intoyled in the present iudgements of God, or fast chained in the pit of hell, in the torments of finall condemnation.

Thirdly, If our searches and wardes should faile vs, wee are sure our distrust cannot; It is not possible our heart should deceiue vs, if we trust it not; Wee carry

carry a remedy within vs of others fraud; and why not of our owne? The Italians not vnwisely pray God (in their knowne prouerbe) to deliuer them from whom they trust; for wee are obnoxious to those we relie vpon, but nothing can leese that which it had not; Distrust therefore can neuer be disappointed: If our hearts then shall promise vs ought (as it hath learned to profer largely, of him that said, *All these will I giue thee*) although with vowes & oathes, aske for his assurances; if he cannot fetch them from the euidences of God, trust him not: If he shall report ought to vs, aske for his witnesses; if he cannot

produce them from the record
of God, trust him not: If he shal
aduise vs ought, aske for hi
warrant; if he cannot fetch i
from the Oracles of God, trus
him not; And in all things so
beare our selues to our heart, a
those that thinke they liue a-
mongst theeues and cozeners;
euer icalously and suspiciously;
taking nothing of their word
scarce daring to trust our own
senses; making sure worke in al
matters of their transactions
I know I speake to wise men
whose counsell is wont to be as
ked, and followed, in matter o
the assurances of estates; whos
wisdome is frequently imploye
in the triall, euiction, dooming

o

of malefactors: Alas, what shall it auaile you that you can aduise for the preuention of others fraud, if in the meane time you suffer your selues to be cozened at home? What comfort can you finde in publike seruice to the state against offenders, if you should carry a fraudulent and wicked heart in your owne bosomes? There is one aboue whom wee may trust, whose word is more firme than heauen; When heauen shall passe, that shall stand; It is no trusting ought besides, any further than he giues his word for it. Mans Epithet is, *Homo mendax*, and his best part, the hearts, *deceitfull*. Alas, what shall wee thinke, or say

say of the condition of those men, which neuer follow any other aduice than what they take of their owne heart? Such are the most; that make not Gods Law of their counsell; As Esa. 57.17. *Esay* said of Israel, *Abijt vagus in viacordis sui*: Surely they are not more sure they haue an heart, than that they shall be deceiued with it, and betraied vnto death; Of them may I say, as *Salomon* doth of the wanton foole, that Pro. 7.21. followes an harlot; *Thus with her great craft she caused him to yeeld, and with her flattering lips she inticed him: And he followed her straightwayes, as an Oxe that goes to the slaughter, or as a foole to the stocks for correction.* Oh then, deare Christians,

Christians, as euer yee desire to auoid that direfull slaughter-house of hell, those wailings, and gnashings, and gnawings, and euerlasting burnings, looke carefully to your owne hearts; and what euer suggestions they shall make vnto you, trust them not, till you haue tried them by that vnfaileable rule of righteousnesse, the royall law of your Maker, which can no more deceiue you, than your hearts can free you from deceit.

Lastly, that wee may auoid not onely the euents, but the very enterprises of this deceit, let vs countermine the subtill workings of the heart. Our

Sauiour hath bidden vs be wise as Serpents; What should bee wise but the heart? And can the heart be wiser than it selfe? Can the wisdome of the heart remedie the craft of the heart? Certainly it may. There are two men in euery regenerate breast, the old and the new; And of these (as they are euer plotting against each other) wee must take the better side, and labour that the new man, by being more wise in God, may out-strip the old: And how shall that be done? If we would dispossesse the strong man that keepes the house, our Sauiour bids vs bring in a stronger than hee; and if wee would

would ouer-reach the subtiltie of the old man, yea, the old Serpent, bring in a wiser than hee, euen the Spirit of God, the God of wisdome; If wee would haue *Achitophels* wicked counsels crossed, set vp an *Hushai* within vs: The foolishnesse of God is wiser than the wisdome of men. Could wee but settle God within vs, our craftie hearts would bee out of countenance, and durst not offer to play any of their deluding tricks before him from whom nothing is hid; and if they could bee so impudently presumptuous, yet they should be so soone controlled in their first motions, that there would

bee more danger of their confusion, than of our deceit. As yee loue your selues therefore, and your owne safetie, and would bee free from the perill of this secret broaker of Satan, your owne hearts, render them obediently into the hands of God; giue him the keyes of these closets of his owne making; beseech him that hee will vouchsafe to dwell and reigne in them; so shall wee be sure that neither Satan shall deceiue them, nor they deceiue vs; but both wee and they shall be kept safe and inuiolable, and presented glorious to the appearance of our Lord IESVS CHRIST: To whom with

with the FATHER, and the HOLY GHOST, be all honour and glory, for euer and euer.

AMEN.

FINIS.